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Key:

- VM = Voting ITAC Member
- VM/SC = Voting ITAC Member/School Committee
- NVM = Non-Voting Member
- FBL = Friend of Belmont Library
- TS = Town Staff
- T = Tardy

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Meeting called to order at 7:32pm in Conference Room 4.

1. Richard L. Trembowicz from EdNets addressed ITAC. he says that we have good web technology, unlike most Mass schools, but as the system gets more complicated we're having trouble scaling. This is especially true as we are trying to tap into the Student Information Management System and as we try to get data out of the website.

EdNet provides a web-platform that integrates with the SIMS and is tailored to each grade level.

The EdNet system integrates with a registered card loyalty program. This is used to generate revenue for the schools.

One is online purchasing --- there is an online mall within each school website. The mall has many vendors and promises a percentage for each sale. You don't have to register the cards; it's all done with eCommerce affiliate tracking, which means that the system keeps track that the referral came from the school's website. The information is also captured and is used for multiple processes, including marketing and serving user-specific advertisements to site visitors. This may, in turn, be shared with other stores and companies.

For example, Eddie Bauer returns 5% to the school system, Land's End returns 4% to the school system, etc. EdNets typically gets 25% above this for its fees.

One of the companies listed is Figleaves.com. However, the system allows individual companies to be suppressed by the town, should we wish to do that.

Sponsor information is automatically blocked until a person logs in and identifies themselves as being over the age of 16. Users can also chose in their profiles to not see any advertisements.

Jim Berets noted that the "change password" screen in the sample website is not done via HTTPS, and that the date of birth on the profile is sent over the network without encryption.

The system includes a content management system which allows content to be added or deleted without knowing HTML. Individuals can be given control to update content in only a few places. The system can also be set up so that content needs to be approved

before it goes live.

Jim Berets asks - If we chose to keep the Town's current website framework, is it possible to link the eMall from our existing website? Trembowicz says that this would be disadvantageous, because normally revenue is generated by the integration of the advertisements into the entire website. Revenue is generated by both display click-through on the advertisements (to people over 16 who have not opted-out). This revenue is shared 50/50 between EdNets and the sponsoring school.

There is also a registered card program. It can be a Mastercard, VISA, American Express, or Discover. (No diner's club.) The card is registered with the 16-digit code and exp-date. The system allows cards to be registered to both EdNet and another vendor (like U-Promise) at the same time.

Jonathan Green says: So you are basically offering a website for free and giving the school the opportunity to generate fundraising (once the website's basic costs are paid for.) So possible risks to the town:

1 - We go through this program, spending effort to switch over to EdNet. We spend a marketing effort to get the people of the town used to this new thing. EdNet is a young company. Perhaps EdNet stops offering this program, or perhaps the town gets unsatisfied. What is the ownership?

Trembowicz: The website is EdNet's, the underlying content is yours. (The content stored in the SQL server.)

JG: So I am worried that the town would be in a relationship. Would the town have to go back to square 1, or is there a usable piece that comes out?

Trembowicz: The CMS is Bridgeline Software, based in Woburn, MA. We have a provision in the contract for the storage of software in the event of business failure. You could use it for your own purposes, but not resell. If you decide to terminate because you are dissatisfied, but not for breach, because you want to go something else. You could go do something else; we would give you back all of the content in the database, because it would be your content.

JG: I see a community that might get hooked and used to the look and feel of this particular website, and you guys disappear.

Trembowicz: You have source-code. It's standard dot-Net platform, C#, SQL Server. But if you choose to leave, that is a business choice.

2 - JG: You have which communities again?

RLT: North Redding, georgetown, berlin-boylston regional,

Lincoln Rhode Island, East Grenich RI, North Providence (expected next week), Narrigance (expected next week), Marlboro MA (expected next week), and a large number of districted in review.

JG: What happened with Arlington? In 2004-2005 you had a 7-0 vote for the school district. What happened?

RLT: They wanted us to demonstrate a product and then come back.

JG: How much funding have you raised?

RLT: \$1.4M, and tomorrow we have a term sheet for another \$2M, which we close. New angel investors and our existing investors. We've had a lot of discussions with VCs that think this is a neat concept but they want to see us get through our first wave.

3 - JG: There is another issue, which is more of a school community issue, which is advertising. Promotional stuff on a school website.

RLT: We are happy to address that with any school. If you go into most districts you will find more advertising: vending machines. Scholastic hands out catalogs to the kids. Score boards with Coke Logo. Your yearbook I suspect has significant commercial sponsorship. Your sports teams are sponsored by local businesses. Playbills have advertisements.

4 - SLG: I'm concerned about privacy issues. This system potentially collects a lot of information.

RLT: Anything that is on our site, even as it relates to sponsors, we do not release that information without the consent of the individual. We want third-parties to pay us to manage advertising campaigns through the platform.

If you click-through to a third-party website, even when you go to Mall networks, we give you notice that you are leaving an EdNet site and that we do not control the content of that other site. (SLG: But that other site knows that the user is coming in from EdNet and probably from our EdNet site.) That is correct.

5 - SLG: Availability and security:

CR: It's at a third-party hosted facility with physical staff 24x7. Total redundancy, within each box. (multiple schools on the same box?) Yes, but a separate instantiation of IIS - a separate spawn process for each one. If someone were to get into one district, they can't get into another. Right now Bridgeline is hosting it.

JB: You will end up with a lot of student and parent data. If the system gets broken into, the person who breaks in has birthdays and stuff.

CR: My background is in financial data services. Everything that the Security Exchange Commission requires for personal financial data, that is exactly what we are doing to store our information.

JB: So you are telling me that the security of your website is equivalent to Fidelity?

CR: Yes.

Lee McCanne: So why aren't you using SSL for changing passwords.

CR: I said that was a mistake on the editing of the profile. We are using SSL for the entire registration process.

Lee McCanne says that the CMS platform that EdNet has put together is far beyond what BPS has put together.

RLT says that they have put their education platform against Moodle, and they will be far beyond what Moodle is offering by September. We don't do grading; that is on the Student Information Management System. It will do homework, class materials, lesson plans, links to electronic texts, classroom news, classroom calendar, profile of the teacher. Depending on what system they are using, the second-stage will be integration - things like grades, IEPS (individual education plans for special education).

David Rich asks "do you have any estimate of how much money can be raised?"

RLT hands out an estimate. It shows \$17,041 in months 1-6 and \$775,270 in year 5. That assumption for year 5 includes 1 high school, 1 middle school, 4 elementary schools, and assumes that 24.91% of the families are "members" and that they are generating \$908K of rebates a year with an average rebate of 3.5%.

Most of this money is from in-store use of registered cards, and not from online purchases.

JG asks if there is a case history that we can look at. RLT says that nobody has been signed up long enough. Georgetown signed up in late April and is at 60-75 members right now. Their first push is aimed at signing on leadership - people in PTOs. Their big push will be in September. Georgetown has a population 2200 students. They are in the Merrimack valley and have lower median family income than Belmont.

David Rich says that he lived in California (Palo Alto) and that they had school cards that families could sign up to get money for the school.

RLT says that a this is better than U-Promise: they have had a problem because of the difficulty of getting people to create 529 accounts. They have no way of reaching back to people except through email. So they have 7 million registered users, but only 1

million active users.

Ednets gets around this by distributing handouts to the schools and by attending school events.

SLG asks if there has been any formal usability testing. RLT says that there has been feedback from.

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>>> The current EdNets Terms of Service:
>>>
>>> Protecting your privacy is important to us. We hope the
following
>>> statement will help you understand how EdNets collects, uses
and
>>> safeguards the personal information you provide to us on
EdNets.com
>>> and the School Websites and through the EdNets Programs
(collectively
>>> the ``Websites'') EdNets.com is a licensee of the TRUSTe
Privacy
>>> Program. TRUSTe is an independent, non-profit organization
whose
>>> mission is to build users' trust and confidence in the
Internet by
>>> promoting the use of fair information practices. The TRUSTe
Privacy
>>> Program covers the Websites. As a demonstration of its
commitment to
>>> your privacy, EdNets discloses its information collection and
>>> distribution practices to the public and has its privacy policy
>>> reviewed for compliance by TRUSTe. By displaying the TRUSTe
trustmark,
>>> EdNets has agreed to notify you of:
>>>
>>> 1.The personally identifiable information of yours or third
party
>>> personally identifiable information that is collected from
you
>>> through the Websites
>>>
>>> 2.The name of the organization that collects, manages and
owns the information
>>>
>>> 3.How the information is used
>>>
>>> 4.The parties with whom the information may be shared
>>>
>>> 5.The choices available to you regarding collection, use and
distribution of the information
>>>
>>> 6.The security procedures that are in place to protect the
loss,
>>> misuse or alteration of information under EdNets' control
>>>
>>> 7.The process to correct any inaccuracies in the information.
>>>
>>> If you have questions or concerns regarding this statement,
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you should

>>> first contact EdNets at privacy@EdNets.com. If you do not receive
>>> acknowledgment of your inquiry or your inquiry has not been
>>> satisfactorily addressed, you should then contact TRUSTe through the
>>> "TRUSTe WatchDog Dispute Resolution Process". TRUSTe will then serve
>>> as a liaison with EdNets to resolve your concerns. However, please
>>> understand the TRUSTe program covers only information that is
>>> collected through the Websites, and does not cover information that
>>> may be collected through software downloaded from the Websites that is
>>> controlled or managed by parties other than EdNets.
Information
>>> EdNets Collects from You
>>>
>>> EdNets collects information from you to manage access to
>>> student information and/or to operate the EdNets ``registered
>>> card'' fundraising program (the ``Rebate Program'').
>>>
>>>
>>> Protecting your privacy is important

2. Approval of the Minutes:

Motion to accept the minutes as amended.

3. Notification of resignations.

We have been informed that the following members of ITAC have submitted resignations to the Board of Selectmen and the Library:

- Julie Meringer <forrester.com!jmeringer>
- Matt Berube <gmail.com!matthewberube>

4. Update on Munis (Dave Petto)

The contract has gone through Town Council. Barbara has signed it. On Monday the Board of Selectmen signs it, and on Tuesday MUNIS signs it. The contract is 69 pages and has been under negotiation for 6 weeks.

MUNIS started 3 weeks ago working on the Belmont accounts structure (working on good faith). A kick-off meeting was held on Tuesday, where the plan of action was discussed.

S&S is done as of December 31st. There has been no ability to continue support. We have to get all of our data out of S&S by December 31st. We hope to be running the systems in parallel by the end of November. MUNIS feels very confident that this can be done with no problems.

5. GIS (Dave Petto)

Moving along with the Light Department. We have a date of August 7th to do a presentation for the Board of Selectmen.

6. Town Website. (Dave Petto)

We have contracted with Virtual Town Hall to redesign our website. For \$3000, they will fix all the broken links and "redesign" it depending on what we want them to do.

7. Fiber Redundancy RFR

Lee says it's about to be sent out, but it needs to be run by the lawyers first. Design work is done. This is for the implementation of the first phase, including router reconfiguration.

8. Jim Berets notes that there are now several openings on the ITAC. It's important to make sure that all departments keep their representation.

9. Discussion of EdNets proposal.

Jonathan Green: There seems to be little risk in doing this. The company may fold; the site may not look the way we want it to. But the advertisements seem to be restrained, and there is a revenue source. It looks like free money. The question is whether or not we want to commercialize our website, and that's really up to the School Committee.

Jim Berets: I concur with Jonathan: the advertising is not as blatant. I'm concerned about having Lee and the Technology Department study the CMS to make sure that it meets are anticipated needs for the next few years, so that you don't get in a situation where you can't do what you want with the website without having to build your own new website and have it hold off the side. The one thing we didn't discuss was the business plan. I want to make sure that we are not setting ourselves up so that we adopt their system, use it, and the town only sees \$100/year. I have concerns about security because of the lack of SSL and the lack of knowledge of the security measures in effect at the outsourced data center.

David Goldberg (who does represent the school committee): I suspect that there will be others on the school committee who have concerns about the advertising, but it didn't seem that objectionable.

Lee McCanne: I have a lot of concerns. The risk is greater than what you described. There is going to be years of time invested in transfer current content to the new system, and if they go belly-up, I don't think that it is viable to grab their code and try to make it work. And if they don't go belly-up, that's still a huge investment in time. Second, it's a huge time commitment in membership --- all they provide is the handouts. The only way it works is if you get everybody to sign up. They are charging \$153K/year to run the website; I can subscribe to a content management site that will do 50% of this for \$9K/year. It's true that what they are building, at least potentially, is going to be pretty comprehensive, or at least have the potential. Nobody does everything that they are talking about, but they don't actually do

everything that they are talking about. They make a ton of money: this \$153K is only one of the things they make money on. One of the things they do behind the scenes is track purchases to individuals the way that Shaws can do, but for other kinds of transactions that other people can't. So I think that they want to be able to offer this service to organizations; they stand to make a huge amount of money if they can make this fly, but they are charging a factor of 10 higher than most school organization services would be charging. And the numbers, if you look at this, they claim they only need 25% membership to make this fly. Would everyone in this room go and register their credit-cards on this site? I don't think so. I think that it would be very hard to get people to trust their organization. And I don't know if I would want to stretch my neck out to say "register with this organization that has no track record."

The services that I've seen, although some of them look well-developed, they talked about two --- one was vapor-ware, and the other was a cafeteria program. Advertising I think is going to be an issue for the school committee. And then I think that there are privacy issues. And if we integrate with the Student Information System, they would have, potentially, the address, the names of all the children, the cell phone numbers, the grades.

The idea of being able to raise money is extremely attractive. We need ways to fund technology. If there was a way that this could work, it might be worth a shot. But I'm not convinced at this point. Perhaps if they get a bunch of schools off the ground and can reduce their fees.

David Rich: I don't see the motivation to be an early-adopter. It seems like they have convinced some school districts to sign up. They are not saying "if you come in now, there will be no fee." They are offering two separate things - a way to raise money, and a way to manage your content. I didn't see any compare-and-contrast to see that any one was better than the alternatives. If we are happy with our school site, then how desperate are we for content management? And are there other ways that we can raise money? If they were already a profitable company than the risks and concerns would be addressed.

Simson: The main thing they are using to raise money is registered cards, and the only reason that they have the website is so that there is a way to keep people's cards registered. I think that you'll be better off going with Moodle.

Dave Petto: I'm concerned about the security. The basic security of using SSL wasn't there. And having residents and student information out there --- that's scary. If there is any thought of doing this, I would say 'wait a year' and see what happens with the school systems that sign up.

Jim Berets: I am hearing that we don't toss this out entirely, but see what happens after they have a track record. Should we take another look in 6 to 9 months? See what other towns they sign up, and see how their early adopters?

Simson: We don't have any reason to be an early adopter, because we have our own system.

Motion: "Resolved, because EdNets has just started signing up communities and has a minimal track record, ITAC recommends that the Belmont Schools reconsider the EdNets proposal in 9 to 12 months. This will give EdNets the time to establish a track record and better define its offering."

Votes in favor: 4

Votes opposed: 0

Motion passes.

10. Next meeting scheduled for: 7:30pm, July 26th.

11. Meeting adjourned at 9:55pm